

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of performing direct current pressurized sintering to powder in a mold having a ~~cylindrical~~ molding space, comprising the steps of arranging an electrode at the periphery of a side wall of a cylindrical mold having a rod-shaped molding space, continuously effecting heating and sintering while relatively moving a current portion and a sintering subject in the rod-shaped molding space by energizing the electrode, pressurizing sintering powder material of the sintering subject disposed in the cylindrical rod-shaped molding space from an end of the mold, and disposing an moving the electrode movable relative to the mold in the lengthwise direction of said mold around the mold, said sintering step being effected by electrifying and heating a step of continuously sintering the sintering powder material in the cylindrical mold from one end to the other end of the mold with sintering temperature being precisely controlled at each position of the electrode relative to the mold.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method of performing direct current pressure sintering to powder in a mold ~~having a cylindrical molding space~~, comprising the steps of: ~~continuously effecting sintering while relatively moving a current portion and a sintering subject, and~~ providing an electrode connection terminal assembly affixed to a periphery of a side wall of the an elongate mold having a rod-shaped molding space and having a space portion capable of moving freely on a single axis along the length of the elongate mold;

arranging an electrode on the electrode connection terminal assembly;
heating and sintering a sintering subject in the rod-shaped molding space by
energizing the electrode;
pressurizing sintering powder material of the sintering subject disposed in the rod-
shaped molding space from an end of the mold; and
moving the electrode connection terminal assembly relative to the mold in the
lengthwise direction of said mold along the length of the elongate mold;
said sintering step being effected by continuously sintering the sintering powder
material in the cylindrical mold from one end to the other end of the mold
by the connection terminal assembly moving the ~~current portion~~ electrode
relative to the mold with sintering temperature being precisely controlled
at each position.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A method of performing direct current pressure sintering
to powder in a mold having a molding space, ~~wherein~~ comprising the steps of:

arranging an electrode at the periphery of a side wall of a mold having an elongate
molding space with an uneven cross section along its length;
~~heating and sintering is continuously effected while relatively moving a current~~
~~portion and a sintering subject , and a material with~~ having an uneven
cross section is sintered while by energizing the electrode;
pressurizing sintering powder material of the sintering subject disposed in the
molding space from an end of the mold; and
moving the electrode relative to the mold in the lengthwise direction of said mold
to a plurality of positions setting a plurality of heating area areas;

said sintering step being a step of continuously sintering the sintering powder material in the mold within each of the plurality of heating areas from one end to the other end of the mold with sintering temperature being precisely controlled at each position of the electrode relative to the mold.

Claims 4-14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1, ~~wherein further comprising the step of affixing~~ an electrode connection terminal assembly ~~affixed~~ to a periphery of the side wall of the mold and having a space portion capable of moving freely on a single axis ~~is provided along the length of the cylindrical mold~~, and wherein sintering is effected ~~by~~ at the position of the connection terminal assembly moving the current portion relative to the mold.

Claim 16 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1, wherein the sintering powder material is pressurized from both ends of the mold.

Claim 17 (previously presented): A method according to claim 1, wherein the sintering powder material is sintered in one direction.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1, wherein ~~a long~~ the sintering powder material is sintered to form an elongate rod-shaped sintered body.

Claim 19 (previously presented): A method according to claim 2, wherein the powder is pressurized from both ends of the mold.

Claim 20 (previously presented): A method according to claim 2, wherein the powder is sintered in one direction.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A method according to claim 2, wherein ~~a long~~ the powder is sintered to form an elongate rod-shaped sintered body.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A method according to claim 3, ~~wherein further~~ comprising the step of affixing an electrode connection terminal assembly ~~affixed~~ to a periphery of the side wall of the mold and having a space portion capable of moving freely on a single axis ~~is provided~~ along the length of the cylindrical mold, and wherein sintering is effected ~~by~~ at the position of the connection terminal assembly moving the current portion relative to the mold.

Claim 23 (previously presented): A method according to claim 3, wherein the powder is pressurized from both ends of the mold.

Claim 24 (previously presented): A method according to claim 3, wherein the powder is sintered in one direction.

Claim 25 (currently amended): A method according to claim 3, wherein ~~a long~~ the powder material is sintered to form an elongate sintered body having an uneven cross-section.

Claims 26-29 (canceled).